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SUBJECT: UK HOSTS P5 UN DEPUTY DIRECTORS MEETING

11. (SBU) Summary: IO PDAS Gerald Anderson participated in a P5 UN Deputy Directors meeting at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in London on November 23. The Deputy Director-level meeting was the first of its kind and covered Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding reform, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Sanctions, UN Security Council reform, UN Budget Negotiations, Peacekeeping funding, and wider UN reform. An informal working lunch afterwards included presentations from the UK government and follow-up discussions on the Middle East and Iran. The parties agreed on the need for more strategic peacekeeping missions with clearer exit strategies. They all welcomed an Afghanistan conference in London, but emphasized the need for it to have the Afghans' support and a clearly defined purpose. The Europeans supported U.S. proposals to bolster the 1267 Sanctions regime against domestic legal challenges, though the Russians expressed concerns that it would weaken the regime, and the Chinese worried the proposed system would create domestic legal problems within their system. While none of the participants have changed their positions on UNSC reform, the UK voiced some support for a joint P5 statement of principles. The other parties agreed on the need for unity but argued that joint statements were not advisable. France and the U.S. made suggestions for efficiency reforms in personnel, re-costing, and information technology to tackle budget escalation. The UK argued that the current Peacekeeping Scale of Assessments is grossly unfair, but China argued it could not support reform of the Scale of Assessment because of its G77 political commitments. All parties agreed that the existing system for identifying management weaknesses in the UN were robust, but that the P5 should do more to ensure that these weaknesses are highlighted and addressed. With regard to Iran, the Russians emphasized the need to exhaust diplomatic options before discussing further sanctions. EndSummary.

#### PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING REFORM

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12. (SBU) Nicholas Hopton, Deputy Director of the International Organizations Department at the FCO, began by endorsing the New Horizons report on Peacekeeping. He said the British Government wants to see more strategic peacekeeping, which would mean lower costs and clearer mandates. He argued that there should be a stronger link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and that the transition between them should be planned from the beginning of any UN operation. He suggested MONUC (the UN mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo) as an example of a UN operation that should be scaled down.

13. (SBU) PDAS Anderson noted that President Obama's convening of a meeting with the largest peacekeeping contributors in September showed the importance the U.S. attaches to peacekeeping. He echoed Hopton's thought on the need to strengthen links between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Anderson suggested it may be time to revisit UN policy regarding seconding national personnel into

peacekeeping operations, as a means of facilitating contributions of high-value personnel. He noted that events on the ground, with ongoing significant violence in MONUC's area of operations, particularly against civilians, suggest that it is too early to begin winding it down. Marc Giacomini, the French Deputy Director for the UN, International Organizations, Human Rights and La Francophonie, agreed that it was too soon to consider a shutdown of MONUC.

¶4. (SBU) Tao Yang, Deputy Director General at the Department of International Organizations and Conferences at the Chinese MFA, applauded the New Horizons report. He noted, however, that China did not support the idea of lengthening troop rotations; the deployments of troops were already too long and were causing physical and psychological strain on Chinese troops. He also stressed the need to develop clear indicators in operations that would lead to moving to the next phase of the operation and ultimately to an exit strategy. He also recommended changes in the UN process, noting that troop-contributing countries were reluctant to speak out in the existing TCC meetings but that the working group meetings were more useful. Finally, he said that he finds it disappointing that reform is already considered necessary in the Peacebuilding Commission even though it is only four years old.

¶5. (SBU) Andrei Kovalenko, Deputy Head of the International Organizations Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry, said that his government viewed the New Horizons report positively but is still waiting for formal proposals that might arise as a result. He reiterated the need for a clear exit strategy from the beginning and noted that the ceiling on available resources has already been hit. He lamented the inefficiency of the Secretariat and said his government was not happy with the restructuring of peacekeeping into DPKO and DFO, which had resulted in massive expansion of posts. He said there should be an agency to provide peacekeeping support, but that this should ultimately reduce costs, not raise them.

#### Afghanistan

¶6. (SBU) Karen Pierce, the FCO's lead on Afghanistan, briefed on the UK's view of the situation in Afghanistan. She said that Karzai said the right things in his inaugural speech regarding inclusiveness of all Afghan factions, tackling corruption, building an effective police and military force, and governing effectively. Pierce said the military campaign is going well and praised General McChrystal's reorientation of it to focus on counter-insurgency. She added that the UK would stay until the job is done.

¶7. (SBU) Pierce said the key should now be to focus on how the international community can ensure that the vision Karzai articulated comes to fruition. She noted that the UK is coordinating closely with the Afghans about a conference in London in January 2010, which she said should focus on the international elements of a solution and should complement a conference Karzai wants to hold in Afghanistan on internal issues. Pierce said the the UK had urged Karzai to agree to a London conference in January because the Afghans will not be ready for their internal conference until at least March. She also stressed the importance of the international community presenting a coherent message to Karzai, since the Afghan government was using differences in messaging as an excuse to delay progress.

¶8. (SBU) Tao said that the international community could not let Afghanistan become a failed state because extremists will return. He urged continued pressure on Karzai to bridge gaps in Afghanistan and to help Afghan people see concrete economic peace dividends. He noted that the Taliban are a proxy for the Pashtuns and that national reconciliation will not happen without talking to the Taliban. He also stressed the importance of Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors,

making special note of the need to improve relations between the competing tribes in Pakistan and the importance of insuring that Iran cannot use Afghanistan as leverage for its foreign policy goals. He said China would support a London conference as long as the Afghans wanted it but underlined the need for good preparatory meetings to make the conference successful.

¶9. (SBU) Giacomini cautioned that increased military involvement tends to negatively affect the level of connection between the foreign missions and the people. He advocated for greater personal contact between UN personnel and the Afghan population as a means of mitigating negative popular attitudes about the foreign presence.

¶10. (SBU) The Russian side said it was open to the conference as well if it could be guaranteed that it was what the Afghans wanted and was not being imposed on them. They also stressed that the conference should focus on external relations and not the many internal problems facing Afghanistan.

#### SANCTIONS

¶11. (SBU) PDAS Anderson made a presentation on U.S. proposals for a revised listing and de-listing process for 1267 sanctions. These are essential as a response to challenges to the sanctions system in national and European courts, and include the creation of an ombudsman for accepting challenges to listing decisions, an expanded role for the monitoring team, and fuller narrative justifications in advance of listing decisions.

¶12. (SBU) Hopton welcomed the U.S. proposals, saying that judicial review in British and European courts was a serious and pressing issue that threatened the whole 1267 regime.

¶13. (SBU) Kovalenko said the relevant Russian agencies were still studying the U.S. proposal. The Russian side worried about the role and authority of an ombudsman and asked for clarification as to his role and whether this would weaken the whole regime and take power away from the Security Council. Anderson assured the Russians that the ombudsman would only have a coordinating role in the gathering of information and decisions on de-listings would still rest with the UNSC. Giacomini also responded to the Russians by saying he understood their concerns, but that the problem facing Europeans and other countries was acute and immediate, and that a failure to act could lead to a collapse of the sanctions regime.

¶14. (SBU) Tao said he agreed that more transparency in the 1267 regime was needed but that China preferred to fix the existing system. He worried that the U.S. proposal might create problems within the Chinese legal system, though he said his government had not looked into all the legal ramifications of the U.S. proposal. He suggested a flexible approach that could apply different methods for different countries. Giacomini pointed out that while this sounded attractive in principle, in reality it is necessary to have a uniform standard that can be applied to all people from all countries. Tao responded that his government would look into the problem.

#### UNSC Reform

¶15. (SBU) Hopton noted that a fourth round of talks on Security Council reform has opened. He said HMG's position has not changed and that the UK still favors expansion to include the G4 and African representation. Giacomini said the French had also not changed their position favoring ultimate enlargement of both permanent and non-permanent members with longer terms, and as an interim stage the intermediate options already presented. Russia also has not changed its position and Kovalenko said Russia is interested in interim solutions. Tao said that an intermediate solution

is only one option and that further P5 information sharing is important, especially in projecting a coherent position to the media. He went on to say that in all the talk of reform, the subject of efficiency is often forgotten. He suggested the importance not only of the makeup of the UNSC but also in reforming its role. Tao lamented that the UNSC "has become a sanctions machine," and is "neglecting its mandate for political mediation and conflict prevention."

¶16. (SBU) Hopton advocated making a P5 joint statement on the issue, perhaps just of general principles. Giacomini and Anderson agreed that we must avoid the perception of disunity, but that a joint statement must be approached with great care and might not be appropriate. Tao argued that the time for a joint statement is not ripe.

#### BUDGETS

¶17. (SBU) Giacomini made a brief presentation about the upcoming budget, noting that it is up 10 percent over the 2008-09 budget, which is an especially large increase given the current economic crisis. He suggested that there was room for savings in the indexing of pay scales of civil servants. He noted that 10 percent of UN workers are expected to retire in each of the next several years and significant cost could be saved by not replacing them, or not replacing them in the same jobs at the same levels. He warned that if targeted cuts could not be found that across-the-board reductions would become necessary.

¶18. (SBU) Anderson argued that Giacomini's suggestions should be explored and added that positions could be reviewed to see if they are still necessary given changes in technology and UN programs. He noted that USG Kane has expressed the view that such an approach would elicit complaints from many countries that this would hurt the geographical balance in the UN. Giacomini noted that there were numerous new positions being filled constantly, through which geographical balance could be restored. Anderson added that the UN should be pressed to provide more accurate budget projections for Special Political Missions and agreed with Giacomini's suggesting of looking at re-costing. Lastly, he added that the UN's "Imoja" proposal for IT modernization must be very well-researched before a decision is made on implementation.

¶19. (SBU) Kovalenko expressed great concern with the budget, especially with piecemeal add-ons and said the P5 should press the Secretary General harder to avoid these additional costs and challenge him on the frequent requests he makes for additional funding. He criticized the top-heavy Secretariat as wasteful.

¶20. (SBU) Tao said China was in a difficult position on the budget because it had G77 commitments, so political commitments impinge on its flexibility. He said that a key way to control the budget was through management reform, though he said the UN was "not a company" and there needed to be a balance between efficiency and geographical representation. He also agreed, however, that China would encourage the G77 countries to be more realistic in their approach to the budget. He stressed that too much money was being spent on software updates.

#### SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS

¶21. (SBU) Hopton started the discussion by saying that the UK's proposal for revision to the Low Per Capita Income Adjustment on the regular budget scale stems from the UK's desire for a fairer system, where countries pay according to their ability to do so. He said there are various ideas to do this and that the UK would be willing to give up some benefits if it meant a fairer system. With regard to the peacekeeping scale, he noted the unfairness of the classification of some countries in Group C and that Group C should be gradually phased out and certainly not expanded.

¶22. (SBU) Kovalenko stated that it was impossible to fix disparities by adding burdens to one country or another. He said the system should be the same for all. He said there should not be special rules for some countries and charged that this is what the EU is trying to do. Giacomini responded that the current system had gross inequities, such as the fact that Hungary pays more than Qatar, which has a vastly higher national income per capita. He also added that the EU pays approximately 40 percent of the costs despite accounting for only 30 percent of world income. He emphasized that the EU proposal is designed to redistribute costs, but that more benefit would go to developing countries, not less.

¶23. (SBU) Tao said he agreed with the principle of "capacity to pay." The Chinese have studied the EU proposal but they cannot go along with it. He raised the possibility that when the world economic crisis has eased it may be possible to re-consider a modified proposal similar to the EU's. He noted the G77 position that its members will not agree to moving above Group C and while China did not push for that stance it has to go along with the G77 position. Hopton concluded the discussion by saying that countries who want to be leaders have to lead financially.

#### MANAGEMENT AND WIDER UN REFORM

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¶24. (SBU) Tao said China had three reform priorities: peacekeeping, developmental reform including strengthening of the Department of Social and Economic Affairs, and management reform of the Secretariat. He added that the OIOS (Office of Internal Oversight Services) and IAAC (Independent Audit Advisory Committee) produce good reports on the weaknesses of the UN, but that the P5 should jointly press the General Assembly to develop a mechanism to act on these recommendations.

¶25. (SBU) Giacomini added that there was a need for further coherence in a fragmented system, while also adding that France sees a need for further emphasis on sustainable development and climate change issues.

¶26. (SBU) Anderson noted U.S. concern about the new UN gender entity and expressed our hope that combining the parts will result in cost savings. He agreed with Tao's assessment of the OIOS and IAAC reports and suggested the P5 bring greater attention to those reports. He suggested systemizing the budgetary process, so that audits and evaluations of past performance directly feed into the process of setting future budgets. Finally, he added that the P5 should work to change the pattern of the Secretariat proposing reforms involving on adding new positions but not on improving efficiencies.

#### MIDDLE EAST/IRAN

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¶27. (SBU) FCO Middle East officer Christian Turner briefed the group (minus the Chinese delegation, which had to leave before lunch) on the Middle East peace process. He said the four key issues were Israeli settlements, Palestinian reconciliation, the Goldstone Report, the Gaza humanitarian situation, and increasing tensions on the Israeli-Lebanese border. He noted that the Goldstone Report may be referred for discussion to the UNSC, but that this was preferable to another UNGA discussion, which would almost surely descend into a counter-productive Israel-bashing session. He also said the UK thinks that Israel's investigations into possible violations during operation Cast Lead are not robust enough and that HMG is looking forward to the results of a committee advising Netanyahu about strengthening the investigations.

¶28. (SBU) Iran Desk Officer Will Gelling said the UK's main goals are preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon and making sure no regional powers strike Iran. He said HMG was disappointed that Iran had not responded positively to the outstretched hand of the E3 3. The HMG will keep its hand

outstretched, but if there are not positive signs by the end of 2009, it will be time to move towards sanctions. The Russian delegation said the UK was rushing to sanctions and that more time should be given to other diplomatic options. They also argued that it was a mistake to link the regime's repression to evaluations of its progress on the nuclear file. Giacomini argued forcefully that the West's actions made clear that there was no such link, since the nuclear fuel deal had been made after the Iranian elections. He said that Iran has had time to respond and is now playing for time.

¶29. (U) This cable has been cleared by PDAS Gerald Anderson.

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